

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit for an injection molding machine for processing plastics materials and other plasticizable masses, comprising:

a stationary mold carrier;

a support element;

a moveable mold carrier disposed between the support element and the stationary mold carrier;

a mold centering space disposed between the stationary mold carrier and the moveable mold carrier to accommodate injection molds of variable height, measured in a closing direction;

a drive adapted to move the moveable mold carrier and the support element; guide elements that guide the moveable mold carrier and the support element during movement of the moveable mold carrier and the support element; and

means for moving the support element independently from the moveable mold carrier.

2. (Currently Amended) Mold-closing unit according to claim 1, wherein the means for moving the support element includes a first device and a second device, which are in operable communication with the moveable mold carrier.

3. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit according to claim 1, wherein the drive is a hydraulic drive, the drive includes a cylinder and a piston rod of a hydraulic piston-cylinder unit.

4. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit according to claim 1, wherein the drive is an electromechanical drive and includes a rotational element and a linear movement means in operational connection with the rotational element.

5. (Currently Amended) Mold-closing unit according to claim 2, wherein the means for moving the support element includes actuating means for actuation of the first device and actuation of the second device in an alternating manner an alternate actuation between the first device and the second device.

6. (Currently Amended) Mold-closing unit according to claim 2~~5~~, wherein the first device is a clamping device and the second device is a fixing device, the second device is in operable communication with a portion of the guide elements.

7. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit according to claim 6, wherein the clamping device has a first collet chuck, which is disposed coaxially to the guide element in a region of the portion of the guide elements and can be transferred with the portion of the guide elements into positive operational connection free from play.

8. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit according to claim 7, wherein the first collet chuck has a conical region that is in hydraulic operational connection with a cone ring connected to an annular piston and under the force of resilient means, the annular piston being axially moveable to a limited extent along the guide element.

9. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit according to claim 6, wherein the portion of the guide elements has a thread to form a positive operational connection with a threaded bush of the clamping device.

10. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit according to claim 6, wherein the clamping device, to form a positive operational connection with the portion of the guide elements has at least one nut which is operationally connected to a thread of said portion.

11. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit according to claim 2, wherein the second device fixes the moveable mold carrier in a non-positive manner to the guide elements.

12. (Currently Amended) Mold-closing unit according to claim 11, wherein the ~~fixing second~~ device has a second collet chuck which is disposed coaxially to one of the guide elements and is fixed on the moveable mold carrier.

13. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit according to claim 12, wherein the second collet chuck has a conical region and wherein a second hydraulically actuated annular piston with a conical portion effects the clamping with the conical region when hydraulic pressure is applied.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit according to claim 13, the second annular piston being able to be reset via an additional resilient element.

17. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit according to claim 2, wherein the first device variably fixes the mold tentering space, the first device enters operational connection with a portion of the guide elements to fix the mold tentering space,

the second device is a fixing device allocated to the moveable mold carrier which, on actuation, fixes the moveable mold carrier in its respective position,

wherein when the second device is actuated and the first device is out of operational connection, the drive alters the mold tentering space by displacing the first device along the guide elements,

wherein a part of the drive extends as a linear movement means for the moveable mold carrier in a linear manner in a closing direction even during the closing movement.

18. (Currently Amended) Mold-closing unit according to claim 1, wherein the drive serves as adjusting means for adjusting its own opening stroke~~adjustably alters its own opening stroke when the mold tentering space is altered.~~

19. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit for an injection molding machine for processing plastics materials and other plasticizable masses, comprising:

a stationary mold carrier;

a support element;

a moveable mold carrier disposed between the support element and the stationary mold carrier;

a mold tentering space disposed between the stationary mold carrier and the movable mold carrier to accommodate injection molds of variable height;

a drive adapted to move the moveable mold carrier and the support element;

means for guiding the moveable mold carrier and the support element during a movement of the moveable mold carrier and the support element; and

means for moving the support element independently from the movable mold carrier.

20. (Currently Amended) Mold-closing unit according to claim 19, wherein the means for guiding includes guide elements that guide the moveable mold carrier and the support element during movement of the moveable mold carrier and the support element.

21. (Currently Amended) Mold-closing unit according to claim 19, wherein the means for guiding includes a first portion of a piston rod of the drive and the support element is a second portion of the piston rod of the drive, the piston rod is in operational communication with means for moving the support element.

22. (Currently Amended) Mold-closing unit according to claim 19, wherein the means for guiding includes a force transmission element having a first end and a second end, said first end is hinged to the stationary mold carrier, and the second end is in operable communication with the support element (drive is supported on the second end.

23. (Currently Amended) Mold-closing unit according to claim 19, wherein means for moving the support element includes a first device and a second device, which are in operable communication with the movable mold carrier.

24. (Previously Presented) Mold-closing unit according to claim 23, wherein the first device is a clamping device and the second device is a fixing device, the second device is in operable communication with the means for guiding.